

In the Claims

Sub D1 1. (Original) A method of supervising personal exposure to a consumer electronics device, the method comprising:

receiving a program signal suitable for conversion by the consumer electronics device into user discernible information;

receiving a content-based indicator indicative of the content of the user discernible information;

receiving timing information indicative of a reference time;

C1 cont'd selecting a content-based specification;

selecting a finite time range specification associated with the selected content-based specification;

comparing the selected content-based specification with received content-based indicator when the reference time falls within the finite time range specification; and

generating a control signal based on the comparison between the selected content-based specification and the received content-based indicator.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the content-based indicator is carried by the program signal.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the content-based indicator and the timing information are carried by the program signal.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the timing information is

generated within the consumer electronics device.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the reference time indicated by the timing information is the current time.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein each of the received content-based indicator and the selected content-based specification is a rating.

7. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 6, wherein a block control signal is generated if the received rating exceeds the selected rating.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein each of the received content-based indicator and the selected content-based specification is a subject matter category.

9. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 8, wherein a block control signal is generated if the received subject matter category matches the selected subject matter category.

10. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the control signal is a block control signal, and further comprising impairing the program signal in response to the block control signal.

11. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 10, wherein the program signal is blocked in response to the block control signal.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the consumer electronics device is a television system and the user discernible information comprises audio/video information.

13. (Original) A method of supervising the exposure to a consumer electronics device, the method comprising:

receiving a program signal suitable for conversion by the consumer electronics device into user discernible information;

receiving a content-based rating indicative of the content of the user discernible information;

receiving a timing signal indicative of a reference time;

selecting a first content-based rating;

selecting a first finite time range specification associated with the first content-based rating;

comparing the first selected content-based rating with the received content-based rating when the reference time falls within the first finite time range specification; and

impairing the program signal if the received content-based rating exceeds the first selected content-based rating.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the program signal is impaired by scrambling the program signal.

15. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the program signal is impaired by blocking the program signal.

16. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the selected time range specification repeats for each day of a workweek.

17. (Original) The method of claim 13, further comprising:
selecting a second content-based rating different from the first selected content-based rating;

selecting a second finite time range specification associated with the second

selected content-based rating;

comparing the second selected content-based rating with the received content-based rating when the reference time falls within the second finite time range specification; and

impairing the program signal if the received content-based rating exceeds the second selected content-based rating.

18. (Original) The method of claim 13, further comprising:

selecting a second finite time range specification associated with the first selected content-based rating; and

comparing the first selected content-based rating with the received content-based rating when the reference time falls within the second finite time range specification.

19. (Previously Amended) A recordable medium for a consumer electronics device comprising:

a computer program comprising steps for:

receiving a content-based indicator indicative of the content of user discernible information into which a program signal received by the consumer electronics device is converted;

receiving timing information indicative of a reference time;

selecting a content-based specification;

selecting a finite time range specification associated with the selected content-based specification;

comparing the selected content-based specification with the received content-

based indicator when the reference time falls within the finite time range specification;
and

generating a control signal based on the comparison between the selected
content-based specification and the received content-based indicator.

20. (Original) The recordable medium of claim 19, wherein each of the
received content-based indicator and the selected content-based specification is a
rating.

21. (Previously Amended) The recordable medium of claim 20, wherein
the control signal is generated if the received rating exceeds the selected rating.

22. (Original) The recordable medium of claim 19, wherein each of the
received content-based indicator and the selected content-based specification is a
subject matter category.

23. (Previously Amended) The recordable medium of claim 22, wherein
the control signal is generated if the received subject matter category matches the
selected subject matter category.

24. (Original) The recordable medium of claim 19, wherein the control
signal is generated to impair the program signal.

25. (Previously Amended) A consumer electronics device having "V-chip"
circuitry for supervising personal exposure to user discernible information, comprising:

non-volatile memory configured for receiving a content-based specification and
a finite time range specification;

a logic unit coupled to the non-volatile memory and being configured for
comparing a content-based indicator with the content-based specification when a

reference time falls within the finite time range specification, the logic unit being further configured for generating a control signal in response to the comparison between the content-based indicator and the content-based specification;

a signal impairment mechanism coupled to the logic unit and configured for, based on the control signal, selectively passing a program signal therethrough without substantial impairment or impairing the program signal.

26. (Original) The consumer electronics device of claim 25, further comprising an output device coupled to the signal impairment mechanism for transforming the program signal into the user discernible information.

27. (Original) The consumer electronics device of claim 25, further comprising a data entry system for selectively inputting the content-based specification and associated finite time range specification into the non-volatile memory for storage.

28. (Original) The consumer electronics device of claim 25, wherein the non-volatile memory includes a look-up list for storing a plurality of content-based specifications and associated finite time range specifications.

29. (Original) The consumer electronics device of claim 25, wherein the program signal carries the content-based indicator and reference time, and further comprising a data extraction device coupled to the logic unit for extracting the content-based indicator and reference time from the program signal.

30. (Original) The consumer electronics device of claim 25, wherein the signal impairment device is a switch.

31. (Original) The consumer electronics device of claim 25, wherein the output device is a television system audio/video output device.

32. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the content-based specification and the finite time range specification are selected by a user of the consumer electronics device by inputting the content-based specification and finite time range specification into the consumer electronics device.

33. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the content-based specification and the finite time range specification are selected by a user of the consumer electronics device by selecting a content-based specification and finite time range specification pre-programmed by the manufacturer of the consumer electronics device.

34. (Original) The consumer electronics device of claim 25, wherein the non-volatile memory comprises a content-based specification and a finite time range specification pre-programmed by the manufacturer of the consumer electronics device, and further comprising a data entry system for selecting the pre-programmed content-based specification and finite time range specification.